

Jesuit Neo-Scholasticism and *Criollo* Consciousness in Sor Juana's *El mártir del sacramento*, *San Hermenegildo*

Charles Patterson

Western Washington University, USA

Abstract: Much of the limited scholarship dedicated to Sor Juana's *autos sacramentales* tends to separate them from the *loas* that were meant to introduce them. Critics often exalt the *loas* for the sympathy that they express for indigenous beliefs, while neglecting the *autos* or viewing them as masterful imitations of Calderón's style. This analysis breaks with this trend by demonstrating the thematic unity between the *auto* titled *El mártir del sacramento*, *San Hermenegildo* and the *loa* that precedes it. Reading the two works in the light of Jesuit Neo-Scholasticism and its influence on the development of *criollo* consciousness, the article argues that both *loa* and *auto* contribute to a subversive *criollo* discourse that questions Spain's hegemony and carves a space for Sor Juana's own intellectual activities.

Keywords: Athanasius Kircher, *autos sacramentales*, *criollo* consciousness/conciencia criolla, *El mártir del sacramento*, *San Hermenegildo*, Jesuit Neo-Scholasticism, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

Precisely two hundred years after Columbus's first landfall in the New World, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz's trilogy of *autos sacramentales* with their accompanying *loas* were published in Spain. These were titled, in the order that they were found in that 1692 edition: *El mártir del sacramento*, *San Hermenegildo*; *El cetro de José*; and *El divino Narciso*.¹ While for the past two centuries the flow of religious and literary culture had almost always moved westward from Europe to the Americas, Sor Juana (1651–95) broke with this trend by explicitly intending these Eucharistic dramas to be performed in the metropolis. Adding to this audacity, the introductory *loas* to these three *autos* deal with indigenous cultures and other New World themes in a manner that questions the Spanish imperial project. In recent decades, these themes have drawn scholars to study the *loas* in depth, while they have often neglected the *autos* that the *loas* were meant to introduce. In a manner of speaking, Sor Juana scholars have constructed a metaphorical border fence between the *loas* and the *autos*, exalting the former for dramatizing the conquest of the Americas in a manner sympathetic to the indigenous, while only guardedly praising the latter's masterful exposition of what they see as purely orthodox themes. I argue that this artificial division between the *loas* and the *autos* limits our understanding of both, and that, when read in the context of the Jesuit Neo-Scholasticism that influenced Sor Juana's thinking, both can be seen as participating in a subversive *criollo* discourse. My analysis will focus on the *auto* titled *El mártir del sacramento*, *San Hermenegildo* with its accompanying *loa*.²

Critics who have analyzed Sor Juana's *autos sacramentales* fall into four main categories. In the first are those who study the *loas* while mostly or completely ignoring the *autos* that follow them.³ Scholars in this category tend to focus on the development of *criollo* consciousness and, in the case of the *loa* for *El mártir del sacramento*, biographical elements and theological issues. As Georgina Sabat de Rivers puts it, the *loas* express “una síntesis de lo que constituían sus preocupaciones y deseos personales como mujer intelectual y americana” (316). The second category includes those studies that focus exclusively on one or more of the *autos* without discussion of their introductory *loas*.⁴ These studies generally conclude that

Sor Juana's *autos* are ingenious expositions of orthodox doctrine.⁵ Mauricio Beuchot best summarizes this interpretation:

Éstas son piezas teatrales que transmiten y facilitan la comprensión de ciertos dogmas cristianos a la gente que los veía representar, y a la que había que entregar esos contenidos teológicos digeridos y bien dispuestos, no sólo hechos comprensibles para la mentalidad de los espectadores, sino con los adornos que los hicieran conmovedores y amables. (357)

While the first two groups of critics simply avoid discussing possible connections between the *loas* and the *autos*, a third group actively argues against any such connection.⁶ Paola Marín, for example, contrasts "el tema indígena" of the *loas* with the "ortodoxia religiosa" communicated in the *autos*, labeling this difference one of the "incoherencias ideológicas" and "contradicciones" common to the Baroque (33). Susana Hernández Araico takes the argument a step further by claiming that, with minor alteration, the *loa* for *El mártir del sacramento* "bien pudo servir como prólogo a cualquier otro auto o comedia . . ." ("El montaje" 298).

The fourth and final group includes those few critics who read the *loas* and the *autos* together as cohesive units, which is how I believe Sor Juana intended for them to be viewed.⁷ These scholars, however, with some exception tend to focus mainly on the theological or allegorical unity between them.⁸ According to Pamela Kirk: "When the *auto* and its *loa* are seen as a unit together, other levels of significance emerge which would have encouraged the audience to consider the complexities of conversion and meditate on the ironies of history" (44). Jeremy Paden adds:

Though Sor Juana's *loas* faithfully complete their duty of introducing the *auto*, a task they reserve for the last few lines, they also exceed their function by containing within them a presentation and celebration of the Host. . . . Sor Juana, then, turns both the *auto* and the *loa* that introduces it into allegories that celebrate the sacrament of the Holy Communion. (179)

These scholars rightly recognize the need to read the *loas* and the *autos* together as cohesive units. It was typical in the Golden Age for *loas* and the *autos* or *comedias* that they introduced to be written by different playwrights and then collated by the director (*autor de comedias*). Sor Juana's works, however, as Aurelio González points out, seem to have been the exception (119). Both González and Hernández Araico ("La innovadora") analyze at length the cohesive unity between Sor Juana's *comedia Los empeños de una casa* and the *loas* and *sainetes* that form part of one of the rare Baroque *festejos teatrales* written by a single playwright. It is therefore reasonable to use the same approach in studying her religious works. The real case for reading the *loas* and the *autos* together, however, is in the often overlooked thematic unity that exists between them. While a handful of scholars have discussed this thematic unity in the past, the topic deserves further discussion in the light of the Jesuit Neo-Scholasticism that wielded immense influence among New Spain's intellectual elite, including Sor Juana.

In Octavio Paz's monumental biography of Sor Juana, he explains that Jesuit Neo-Scholasticism was "a vision of world history as the gradual unfolding of a universal and supernatural truth. The sum of that truth was Christianity and the passion of Jesus; in other parts of the world and in other ages, the same mystery had been manifest, not fully, but in symbols and signs and coincident marvels" (35).⁹

This vision of world history was codified primarily in the writings of the German polymath Athanasius Kircher (1602–80), whose works were essential reading among New Spain's intellectuals.¹⁰ Kircher, himself a Jesuit, wrote extensively on a variety of subjects, including music, mathematics, biology, geology, and physics. He had a particular interest, however, in ancient Egypt, which he considered to be the source of all learning. His magnum opus *Oedipus Aegyptiacus* is, ostensibly, an effort to decipher Egyptian hieroglyphs, but quickly turns into a "thorough study of every surviving piece of information on Egyptian philosophy and religion,

together with comparisons of all the systems which subsequently developed from it" (Godwin 57). In this and other works, he attempts to connect the cultures and beliefs of such disparate civilizations as Egypt, China, and the Aztecs, guided by the belief that all contain remnants of a primeval truth only found in its entirety in Catholicism. He was popular among Jesuits because, according to Paula Findlen, he provided "a comparative framework through which to view cultures, languages, and artifacts" and insisted on the "power of history and faith to unite disparate parts of the world" (331–32). Daniel Stolzenberg notes how this worldview affected Jesuit evangelizing efforts: "The notion that all peoples, even those mired in superstition and idolatry, preserved elements of antediluvian wisdom enabled Jesuit missionaries to form relatively sympathetic judgments of the traditions of the Indians, Chinese, and other potential converts" (134).

It is abundantly clear that Sor Juana was an avid reader of Kircher's works. Findlen, after noting that the library featured in one of her portraits includes some of the German's works, calls her "one of the best readers Kircher ever had" (333, 349). She adds:

[Sor Juana] repeatedly pulled his books down from the shelf in order to become learned. Mastering their content, evoking key ingredients, and ultimately critiquing the limits of Kircher's vision of the world were all fundamental aspects of her own claims to be a scholar of some note. Kircher's ideas became an essential resource in the evolution of her own epistemology of knowledge. (335)

While sympathy towards indigenous culture is apparent in her *loas*, her Kircherian worldview also explains her choice of material for her three *autos*. Each finds Eucharistic typology in a different context: in *El cetro*, she demonstrates the exegetical process of finding Christian types in the Old Testament (i.e., Jewish tradition). In *El divino Narciso*, she shows that the same process can be applied to the Greco-Roman myth of Echo and Narcissus. In *El mártir del sacramento*, she applies the same methodology to decisive historical events in Spain's history.

Later in his discussion of Jesuit Neo-Scholasticism, Paz goes on to point out that the Jesuit tendency towards universalism also influenced the emergent *criollo* consciousness:

through historical analogy, the erudition and imagination of the seventeenth century Romanized Mexico Tenochtitlán. The Aztec world was transformed in the imperial mirror of humanism. Mexico-Tenochtitlán was an American Rome and, like the Latin capital, was the seat of first a pagan, then a Christian, empire. In the image of the imperial city of Mexico one could recognize both *criollo* patriotism and the Jesuit dream of Christian universalism embracing all societies and all cultures. (36)

Just as classical Roman mythology had the potential to be Christianized, classical Rome had the potential to become the capital of Christianity. In *criollo*-Jesuit thinking, therefore, Mexican natives and their capital, Tenochtitlán, were seen to have the same potential. The implication is that, through the process of *traslatio imperii*, a New World civilization could eventually eclipse that of the Old World, a particularly attractive idea for *criollos* chafing at the preference given to the *peninsulares* for important government and Church positions. Antonio Rubial García notes this *criollo* consciousness in Sor Juana's close friend Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, whose triumphal arch on the occasion of the Marqués de la Laguna's entry into the viceregal capital was adorned with images of Moctezuma and other indigenous models of good government. He says, "Esa imagen gloriosa de Moctezuma, y con él la de todo el mundo mexicana, fue para Sigüenza, y para otros contemporáneos suyos, un medio que servía para equiparar la historia de su ciudad patria con cualquiera de las de Europa . . ." (356).

Although Sor Juana's own triumphal arch for the same occasion did not contain indigenous themes, she did explore ideas similar to Sigüenza's in the *loa* that precedes *El divino Narciso*, which depicts the allegorical figures of Occidente and América dressed as Native Americans and

dancing in honor of the Dios de las Semillas. When the allegorical figure Religión, representing the Catholic faith, hears about their beliefs, she exclaims:

¡Válgame Dios! ¿Qué dibujos,
qué remedos o qué cifras
de nuestras sacras Verdades
quieren ser estas mentiras? (vv. 261–64)

The rest of their conversation reveals, point by point, the close connection between indigenous beliefs and Catholicism, which is precisely what Sor Juana does with Greco-Roman mythology in the *auto* that this *loa* introduces.

The more immediate predecessor to this New World civilization that the *criollos* were beginning to imagine was of course Spain, which had come to see itself as a new Rome. In *El mártir del sacramento*, *San Hermenegildo* and the *loa* that precedes it, Sor Juana deconstructs Spanish history in such a way as to reveal the New World's potential to eclipse the Old in the same way that Spain had come to eclipse Rome.

The *loa* begins with an argument between two students addressing the question: what is Christ's greatest *fineza*, or favor, to mankind? Estudiante 1, relying on Saint Augustine, argues that it is his death. Estudiante 2, basing his argument on Saint Thomas Aquinas, claims that Christ's greatest gift to humanity is having put himself into the Host through transubstantiation. A third student, whom most scholars identify as Sor Juana's own alter ego, joins the conversation and offers to settle the dispute by putting on a brief play for them. He then summons forth actors dressed as soldiers who are celebrating Hercules's placement in Spain and Africa of the Pillars of Hercules marking the *non plus ultra*, or end of the earth, and proclaiming "no hay más / mundo que el que vemos" (209–10). In the next scene, Christopher Columbus emerges having discovered the New World. He proclaims, "¡Oh Hércules! De tus Columnas / borra el rótulo soberbio / del *Non plus ultra* . . ." (vv. 261–63). He commands Europe:

¡Sal de aquel pasado error,
que tus Antiguos tuvieron,
de que el término del Mundo
no pasaba del Estrecho [de Gibraltar]! (vv. 257–60)

The third student then explains what all of this has to do with the argument over which is Christ's greatest favor to humanity:

No haber más Mundo creía
Hércules en su blazón,
mas se echó al agua Colón
y vio que más mundo había.
Así cuando se entendía
que el llegar a padecer
era del Sumo Poder
la empresa mayor que vieron,
se echó al agua, y conocieron
que quedaba más que hacer. (vv. 367–76)

In other words, just as Columbus corrected the error of ancient geographers, Thomas Aquinas corrected the errors of a previous theologian. In this way, Sor Juana privileges the new over the old, viewing history, in the words of Robin Ann Rice, as "la paulatina revelación de verdades a la humanidad, durante siglos y siglos" (82). Significantly, the playwright uses the discovery of the Americas to illustrate this idea, thereby identifying the New World as the locus for discovery, innovation, and change.

While in the *loa* Sor Juana emphasizes the superiority of the new over the old by dramatizing the geographic discovery of 1492, in the *auto* she turns the calendar back another millennium to the Visigothic period in Spanish history. The Visigoths filled the power vacuum left in the Peninsula upon the collapse of the Roman Empire and ruled until the Moorish invasion in 711. During the long Reconquest of the Peninsula, Christian forces came to see the Visigoths as their forebears. As Taran Sarah Christine Johnston puts it, “[E]xpansionist-era ideologues created representations of an imagined Visigothic past that allowed them to see current political and military realities as continuous with the past and therefore as a coherent unified historical trajectory” (7). Even after the Reconquest was long complete, “la casta de los godos” was synonymous with noble Christian lineage untainted by Semitic blood.¹¹ In other words, the idealization of the Visigothic period was an essential element in Spain’s self-fashioning. The Visigoths, however, were originally not Catholics, but rather practiced a form of Christianity known as Arianism. That is until Hermenegildo, the son of king Leovigildo, converted to Catholicism and began a rebellion against his father. Sor Juana’s *auto* dramatizes Hermenegildo’s internal struggle as he is torn between loyalty to his father and loyalty to his new faith.

Sor Juana manipulates this source material in a way that, like the *loa*, exalts the new over the old. The depiction of the struggle between Arianism and Catholicism in the Visigothic era reminds the audience that Spain’s past was not entirely worthy of idealization, and that Spanish national identity is a work in progress. The implication is that New Spain has the same potential, through the process of *traslatio imperii*, to become a great civilization. To take it a step further, Sor Juana ridicules the reactionary idealization of the past by having heretical characters express an exaltation of the past and a fear of change. For example, Leovigildo’s ambassador, Geserico, tries to convince Hermenegildo to give up his rebellion by reciting a lengthy history of the Goths and then saying:

Si de la secta Arriana,
siempre firmes y constantes,
ellos nunca se apartaron,
¿por qué quieres tú apartarte?
Si el seguir a los Mayores
siempre es la más importante
máxima de los gobiernos
¿por qué vas por otra parte? (vv. 527–34)

These lines ring ironic because, only a few lines earlier, Geserico mentions that Visigoths had not always been Arian:

dejando la idolatría
de sus bárbaros altares,
de los Arrianos dogmas
admitieron las verdades. . . . (vv. 515–18)

The mention of idolatry would have inevitably reminded a seventeenth-century audience of Amerindian beliefs and practices, implying that Spain’s own past is not dissimilar to America’s.

Later, Leovigildo himself expresses the fear that any change in tradition will result in the collapse of his family’s rule:

pues si a tantas Coronas que han pasado,
sólo la Religión ha conservado,
si ella falta, ¿quién duda falte toda
la Estirpe Real de la familia Goda? (vv. 1081–84)

This trepidation also proves ironic, since, as the playwright has reminded the audience in the *loa*, the royal family did in fact remain in power after the Visigothic conversion to Catholicism, and their descendents continued to rule Spain twelve centuries later:

dando al Español Monarca
(y a su venturoso Reino)
el parabién de que sea
feliz heroico heredero
del glorioso Hermenegildo,
siguiendo de Recaredo
la línea real de los Baltos. (vv. 463–69)

Once again, by revealing the development of Spain's current political system, Sor Juana suggests the possibility of change in the colonial system.

Leovigildo also expresses the foolishness of adhering to tradition when, in a fairly tangential speech, he expounds upon the Visigoth laws of royal succession. He notes that kingship has traditionally been elective among the Goths, but explains that this is because, in the early days

. . . el dominio,
siendo Espada más que Cetro,
sin tener Imperio fijo,
fue conveniente a aquel tiempo
la elección y no la herencia. . . . (vv. 1591–95)

Since there was a lack of political stability, it made more sense to elect kings rather than depend on the uncertainty of primogeniture. He goes on to explain that times have changed, making that custom obsolete:

. . . Y considerando
que ya no es dictamen cuerdo
observarla, pues lo mismo
que aprovechó en aquel tiempo
de adelantar las conquistas,
es pernicioso en el nuestro,
donde se ha ensanchado tanto
el Dominio, que el gobierno
no debe estar a adquirir,
como a conservar, atento. . . . (vv. 1617–26)

According to this reasoning, the size and relative stability of the kingdom makes hereditary kingship a better policy. By mentioning the "conquistas," the playwright once again connects Spain's past to New Spain's development, suggesting the latter's potential. She reinforces the value of change a few lines later. Even though Leovigildo's goal in fighting against Hermenegildo is to prevent religious change in the kingdom, his reflection on regal succession ironically concludes with this complaint:

para alborotarse un Reino,
se recibe por delito,
más que lo malo, lo nuevo. . . . (vv. 1643–46)

The third and most complex character through whom Sor Juana ironizes the resistance to change is Apostasía. Although this character is given an allegorical name, he is not actually allegorical,

but rather, the Arian bishop from whom Hermenegildo refuses to receive communion at the play's climax. Before that, Apostasía encourages Leovigildo to take arms against his son:

Juntas están las armas de tu Imperio.
¡Vénga con ellas tanto vituperio!
Haz, Señor, que con ellas te respete,
pues sin ellas no espera ya que acepte
ningún partido su arrogancia necia.
Témate Rey, quien Padre te desprecia;
que sin armas, en estas ocasiones,
van sin autoridad las persuaciones. (vv. 1181–88)

Apostasía's desire to enforce dogma through violence is a contradiction of Estudiante 2's admonition regarding theological debate:

Ésta no es cuestión de voces
sino lid de los conceptos;
y siendo juez la razón,
que será vencedor, pienso,
el que más sutil arguya,
no el que gritare más recio. (vv. 23–28)

Sor Juana's critique of the use of force in theological debate is even more pronounced in the *loa* that introduces *El divino Narciso*. In it, the allegorical figure Celo leads the Spaniards in an attack against the Indians, led by the allegorical figure América. Religión comes to América's defense saying, "¡Espera, no le des muerte, / que la necesito viva!" (vv. 206–07). She goes on to say: "... el rendirla / con razón, me toca a mí, / con suavidad persuasiva" (vv. 215–17). As I mentioned previously, Jesuit Neo-Scholasticism implied certain sympathy towards native beliefs that would have precluded violence. In addition, by criticizing Spain's methods of evangelization in the New World, she once again questions its hegemony in New Spain.

Supposing, then, that by placing certain ideas into the mouths of the villainous Arian characters Sor Juana is ridiculing those ideas, we may draw the following conclusions. First, consistent with the theme of the *loa*, the *auto El mártir del sacramento* criticizes the resistance to theological and political change. Second, consistent with the themes in the *loas* preceding both *El mártir del sacramento* and *El divino Narciso*, Sor Juana criticizes the use of force or other authoritarian methods instead of reason and persuasion in theological debate.

In the same way that the concept of *non plus ultra* adhered to by the ancients had to give way to a new understanding of geography, and in the same way that St. Augustine's ideas had to give way to St. Thomas's, Sor Juana demonstrates that new ideas about religion and kingship superseded the old ones in Spanish history. The *loa* and the *auto* are inextricably united thematically. Keeping in mind the Jesuit Neo-Scholasticism that permeated her thinking, it is reasonable to infer that both *loa* and *auto* contribute to an emerging *criollo* discourse calling for change in Viceregal society. According to this discourse, while it may have once made sense for only *peninsulares* to receive the most important government jobs, this policy should change to include *criollos*. While it may have once made sense for indigenous cultures to be repressed, they should now be recognized as predecessors of the Catholic faith. And, while it may once have made sense for women to be excluded from intellectual pursuits, the time has come for an extremely talented Mexican nun to appropriate a genre traditionally associated with strengthening Spanish imperialism and instead use it to question that very empire's hegemony.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A draft of this essay was presented at the 2010 Latin American Studies Conference at Stephen F. Austin State University. I would like to express my appreciation to Leslie Cecil for organizing that conference. I would also like to thank Dayna Patterson for her useful feedback during the revision process.

NOTES

¹There is some dispute as to the order in which the three *autos* were written. Some believe that *El mártir del sacramento* was written first (Paden 191; Merrim 110; Rice 79; and Sabat de Rivers 315). Lee A. Daniel considers it to be the last ("Sor Juana's" 101). The precise order is not particularly important to my own analysis, although, like Daniel and Paden, I view the three *autos* as a trilogy.

²For a related analysis of *El cetro de José* and its accompanying *loa*, see Patterson 236–52.

³See Cevallos; Daniel, "The *loa*"; Jáuregui; Ponce de León Hernández; Rice; and Sabat de Rivers. Both Méndez Plancarte and Paz study the *loas* and the *autos*, but not as cohesive units.

⁴See Beuchot; Daniel, "Sor Juana's"; Valbuena-Briones; and Worley.

⁵Worley's recent essay is a notable exception. He reads *El mártir del sacramento* as a subversive work based on his analysis of three themes: "la heterodoxia sexual, similitudes y diferencias en el modo de pensar de arrianos y católicos y la ambivalencia del protagonista" (105).

⁶See Grovas; Hernández Araico, "El montaje"; and Marín.

⁷See Egan; Kirk; and Paden. Although Rice focuses mainly on the *loa*, she does discuss some thematic unity between the *loa* and the *auto* of *El mártir del sacramento*.

⁸Linda Egan is the most notable exception. She reads the *loa* and *auto* as thematically united in their subversion, saying that through them Sor Juana "[a]firma . . . que la religión y la autoridad mundana que la consagra están siempre sujetas al cuestionamiento y la reinterpretación" (58).

⁹Although Paz dedicates considerable attention to Jesuit Neo-Scholasticism in relation to the New Spain intelligentsia, he makes no mention of it in his discussion of Sor Juana's *autos*.

¹⁰"Kircher's works were essential repositories of knowledge because they summed up so many other books that overseas readers could neither afford to take with them nor hope to acquire thousands of miles away from printing centers such as Amsterdam and Venice" (Findlen 331). (For a complete list of Kircher's titles, see Godwin 94). The *Athanasius Kircher at Stanford* website (Sutherland Duchacek) provides a good introduction to Kircher, including a spreadsheet of his correspondence with intellectuals and Jesuit missionaries throughout the world.

¹¹Covarrubias Orozco says of the Goths: "[Y] de las reliquias dellos . . . volvió a retoñar la nobleza, que hasta oy día dura, y en tanta estima que para encarecer la presunción de algún vano, le preguntamos si deciendo de la casta de los godos" (645).

WORKS CITED

- Beuchot, Mauricio. "Los autos de Sor Juana: Tres lugares teológicos." *Sor Juana y su mundo: Una mirada actual*. Ed. Sara Poot Herrera. Mexico City: U del Claustro de Sor Juana, 1995. 353–92. Print.
- Cevallos, Francisco Javier. "La alegoría del deseo. La 'Loa para el auto *El mártir del sacramento*, *San Hermenegildo*,' de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz." *Teatro 2* (1992): 43–51. Print.
- Covarrubias Orozco, Sebastián de. *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*. Mexico City: Turner, 1984. Print.
- Cruz, Sor Juana Inés de la. *Obras completas*. Ed. Alfonso Méndez Plancarte. Vol. III. Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1955. Print.
- Daniel, Lee A. "The *loa*: One Aspect of the Sorjuanian Mask." *Latin American Theatre Review* 16.2 (1983): 43–50. Web. 22 June 2011.
- . "Sor Juana's Baroque Martyr-Auto, *El mártir del Sacramento*, *San Hermenegildo*." *Latin American Theater Review* 28.1 (1994): 101–14. Web. 22 June 2011.
- Egan, Linda. "Relativismo y (r)evolución en *Hermenegildo* de Sor Juana." *Diosas, demonios y debate: Las armas metafísicas de Sor Juana*. Salta, Arg.: Biblioteca de Textos Universitarios, 1997. 53–66. Web. 22 June 2011.

- Findlen, Paula. "A Jesuit's Books in the New World: Athanasius Kircher and His American Readers." *Athanasius Kircher: The Last Man Who Knew Everything*. Ed. Paula Findlen. New York: Routledge, 2004. 329–64. Print.
- Godwin, Joscelyn. *Athanasius Kircher: A Renaissance Man and the Quest for Lost Knowledge*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1979. Print.
- González, Aurelio. "Construcción teatral del festejo barroco: *Los empeños de una casa* de Sor Juana." *Anales de Literatura Española* 13 (1999): 117–26. Web. 22 June 2011.
- Grovas, Victor. "Sor Juana dramaturga: La máscara del otro y el eco del yo." *Ángulo* 117 (2009): 78–83. Web. 22 June 2011.
- Hernández Araico, Susana. "La innovadora fiesta barroca de Sor Juana: *Los empeños de una casa*." *El escritor y la escena V: Estudios sobre teatro español y novohispano de los Siglos de Oro. Homenaje a Marc Vitse*. Ed. Ysla Campbell. Ciudad Juárez: U Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez, 1997. 101–14. Web. 22 June 2011.
- . "El montaje de *El mártir del sacramento*: Sor Juana y San Hermenegildo, entre jesuitas y sevillanos." *Destiempos* 3.14 (2008): 286–99. Web. 22 June 2011.
- Jáuregui, Carlos. "'El plato más sabroso': Eucaristía, plagio diabólico, y la traducción criolla del caníbal." *Colonial Latin American Review* 12.2 (2003): 199–231. Print.
- Johnston, Taran Sarah Christine. "The Sacred Face of War: Irredentist Ideology in Early Spanish Literature." Diss. The U of Texas at Austin, 2004. Web. ProQuest. 24 Mar. 2012.
- Kirk, Pamela. *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Religion, Art, and Feminism*. New York: Continuum, 1998. Print.
- Marín, Paola. *Teología y conciencia criolla: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*. Madrid: Ediciones Clásicas, 2006. Print.
- Méndez Plancarte, Alfonso. "Estudio liminar." *Obras completas*. Vol. III. By Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1955. vii–xcviii. Print.
- Merrim, Stephanie. "*Mores Geometricae*: The 'Womanscript' in the Theater of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz." *Feminist Perspectives on Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*. Ed. Stephanie Merrim. Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1991. 94–123. Print.
- Paden, Jeremy. "Reading Religiously: Baroque Hermeneutics in Lope de Vega and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz." Diss. Emory U, 2004. Web. ProQuest. 23 June 2011.
- Patterson, Charles. "A Fruitful Bough: The Old Testament Story of Joseph in Medieval and Golden Age Spanish Literature." Diss. The U of Texas at Austin, 2009. Web. ProQuest. 23 June 2011.
- Paz, Octavio. *Sor Juana: Or, the Traps of Faith*. Tran. Margaret Sayers Peden. Cambridge: The Belknap P of Harvard UP, 1988. Print.
- Ponce de León Hernández, Violeta. "Un ejercicio escolástico en la loa a *El mártir del sacramento*, San Hermenegildo." *Destiempos* 3.14 (2008): 503–11. Web. 22 June 2011.
- Rice, Robin Ann. "La loa como autobiografía intelectual: *El mártir del sacramento*, san Hermenegildo de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz." *Mujeres que escriben en América Latina*. Ed. Sara Beatriz Guardia. Lima: CEMHAL, 2007. 79–85. Print.
- Rubial García, Antonio. "La patria criolla de Sor Juana y sus contemporáneos." *Aproximaciones a Sor Juana*. Ed. Sandra Lorenzano. Mexico City: U del Claustro de Sor Juana, 2005. 347–69. Print.
- Sabat de Rivers, Georgina. "Loa del auto a San Hermenegildo: Sor Juana frente a la autoridad de la sabiduría antigua." *En busca de Sor Juana*. Mexico City: U Nacional Autónoma de México, 1998. 309–31. Web. 22 June 2011.
- Stolzenberg, Daniel. "Kircher Among the Ruins: Esoteric Knowledge and Universal History." *The Great Art of Knowing: The Baroque Encyclopedia of Athanasius Kircher*. Ed. Daniel Stolzenberg. Stanford: Stanford U Libraries, 2001. 127–39. Print.
- Sutherland Duchacek, Suzanne. *Athanasias Kircher at Stanford*. Stanford U, 2011. Web. 30 Mar. 2012.
- Valbuena-Briones, Ángel. "Una tipología del auto sacramental de Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz." *LA CHISPA '93: Selected Proceedings*. New Orleans: Tulane UP, 1993. 254–60. Print.
- Worley, Robert D., Jr. "La politización de la religión expuesta por Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz en el auto titulado *El mártir del sacramento*, San Hermenegildo." *Bulletin of the Comediantes* 63.1 (2011): 105–20. Print.